

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO THAD D. CHRISTOFER ON HIS APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 21, 1998

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a truly outstanding young man from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District, Thad D. Christofer. Thad has recently accepted his offer of appointment to attend the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

Thad, who is from Republic, Ohio, will soon be completing his high school years, and will be preparing to begin what figures to be one of the most challenging and educational opportunities of his life: his four-year commitment at the Naval Academy.

During his high school years, Thad has proven himself to be an exceptional student. In the classroom, Thad's achievements are certainly something of which he and his family can be proud. Currently, he is carrying a perfect 4.0 grade point average. In addition, Thad has extended his scholastic efforts by attending classes at Tiffin University and Heidelberg College.

In addition, Thad is a National Merit Scholar Semifinalist, and is listed in the Who's Who Among American High School Students. Thad has been active in the VFW Voice of Democracy Competition, and has served as President of the Seneca County Chapter of the Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA). And, for the first time in fifty-three years, Thad represented Seneca County as a member of the state DECA Board, serving as its Parliamentarian.

Mr. Speaker, each year, I am privileged to nominate several outstanding young men and women from my district to the nation's military academy. Thad Christofer is certainly a fine student and a fine young man. I am sure he will do very well at the Naval Academy and in all of his future endeavors. Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to stand and join me in paying tribute to Thad D. Christofer, and in wishing him well at the United States Naval Academy.

REMARKS ON JOHN C. "THUNDER" THORNTON

HON. ZACH WAMP

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 21, 1998

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to the House's attention a wonderful and heartwarming story about a distinguished citizen of the 3rd District of Tennessee. It is a story of service above and beyond the call of duty, courage and of a man who knows how to say thanks with grace and style. That man is John C. "Thunder" Thornton, who has built a highly successful business career in Chattanooga and who owns the Crescent H. Guest Ranch in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Describing what happened, Thornton says, "If you don't believe in Guardian Angels, I've got a story for you."

It begins on Friday, March 27, a day that started out as a happy family outing to San

Antonio, Texas to see the final four basketball tournament but that nearly ended in sudden, tragic death. As "Thunder" Thornton tells it, he and his daughter, Dori, 17, and son Johnny, 14, were met at the San Antonio Airport by Cesar Hernandez, who was to drive them in his cab for a tour of the city. They'd planned to visit Trinity University there and to see all the sights in that beautiful old city.

Without warning, Thornton began to feel a numbness in his arm and shortness of breath followed by pain and a feverish feeling "Thunder" Thornton realized that he might be having a heart attack. He asked Hernandez to get him to the hospital as quickly as possible. Then he passed out. He awoke to find himself in the car at the curbside outside the hospital. Hernandez got him into a wheel chair and into the hospital where he received first-class treatment from Cardiologist Dr. Rusty Felton. Even as the treatment began he could hear Hernandez comforting his son and daughter.

Some cab drivers—and many people—would have thought they had done enough by doing only what their job called for in this situation. They'd just call an ambulance and head off to make more fares. But Hernandez went far above what duty required him to do. He rushed Thunder Thornton to the hospital. Then he stayed with Thornton's children while they faced fear and danger, far from home and with neither of their parents in a position to help them. He displayed one of the best traits we like to think we share as Americans, a natural instinct to help others who were in harm's way—even at some personal cost. Unfortunately, we do not see as much of this behavior as we would like in America today. But it was definitely there when it counted that Friday in San Antonio. And Thornton believes that Mr. Hernandez saved his life.

But, Mr. Speaker, this is also a story of gratitude and having the good grace to express it. Many folks would have simply sent Mr. Hernandez a note of thanks. But for Thunder Thornton, that would never have been enough. He arranged a two-part gift. The first was a one-week vacation to Thornton's Crescent H Guest Ranch in Jackson Hole. And the second was a brand new White Cadillac DeVille, which Thornton presented to Hernandez in a video-taped family "thank you card" that was played at a luncheon in San Antonio. Thunder Thornton's action shows that it is important to celebrate those "Guardian Angels" our society needs so badly. It also goes a long way toward telling us the kind of man John Thornton is.

Mr. Speaker, the 3rd District of Tennessee is fortunate to count him among its citizens.

TRIBUTE TO LT. COL. DARRYL B. KREITMAN

HON. CHARLES W. STENHOLM

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 21, 1998

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Lieutenant Colonel Darryl B. Kreitman as he retires with 20 years of distinguished service in the U.S. Air Force.

Lieutenant Colonel Kreitman is retiring from his position as Deputy Chief of the Air Force's Legislative Weapons Systems Liaison Division. In this capacity he is responsible for liai-

son between the Air Force and Congress on annual authorizations of \$30 billion for all Air Force weapons systems, munitions and related technologies. His expertise in this arena and his knowledge of Air Force policy and direction is unparalleled.

In 1978, after receiving his commission as a Second Lieutenant from OTS, he entered Undergraduate Navigator Training at Mather Air Force Base, CA. He then flew as a B-52 navigator and instructor navigator at Griffiss Air Force Base, New York.

Following a one year Pentagon assignment, Darryl began a remarkable tour of duty in the B-1 at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas. From 1986 through 1994, he showed exemplary performance through a range of duties beginning as a B-1 Instructor Offensive Systems Officer and culminating as Commander of the 7th Transportation Squadron. His professionalism was highlighted when he served as Chief of Transportation while deployed to Saudi Arabia. It was during his 8 year tour at Dyess that his wife Judy gave birth to their beautiful little Texas girl—Robbin.

Darryl's expertise was recognized when he returned to the Pentagon in 1994; he was selected to manage the B-1 program for the Air Force's Acquisition community. He then went on to become the B-1 Branch Chief and the Bomber Division Chief.

Mr. Speaker, I join with my colleagues who have directly benefited from the outstanding support Lieutenant Colonel Kreitman has provided the Congress and the executive branch, in both his capacities in legislative liaison and as a premier aviator in the Air Force, in congratulating him for a job extremely well done and in wishing his family the very best in the future. Colonel Kreitman is a professional among professionals and has brought great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION MONTH

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 21, 1998

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address a subject of utmost importance: teen pregnancy prevention.

Mr. Speaker, today the United States retains the unfortunate distinction of having the highest rate of teen pregnancy among industrialized western nations. Over the past decade we have made some progress in bringing down the number of pregnancies among teens. But too many kids are still having kids, and suffering social and economic repercussions throughout their lives because of it. We can and must do better.

We must do better because unintended teen pregnancies mean more difficult lives, and fewer opportunities, for teen parents and their children. We know that teen mothers are less likely to graduate from high school, and more likely to depend on welfare. And their children start life at a distinct disadvantage—on average smaller at birth, they are more likely to be hospitalized, more likely to perform poorly in school, and more likely to suffer abuse and neglect.

And the cycle is likely to be repeated. Over 20 percent of children of teen mothers will in